



Guide for Applicants

Senior Legal Advisor (Corporate Affairs)

Key Dates for Applicants

Closing Date: 2pm on Monday 12th October 2020

Assessment/ Interview Dates: Week commencing 19th October & 2nd November

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Prior to completing the application form we recommend that applicants familiarise themselves with the contents of this guide which includes:

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1. A Message from Jenny Pyper, Chief Executive

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for taking time to read this Guide for Applicants. I hope it gives you all the information you need to decide whether to apply for the position of **Senior Legal Advisor** within Northern Ireland's Utility Regulator.

It is an exciting time to work for us. We are uniquely placed as the UK's only cross-utility regulator. Our extensive remit requires us to be expert and objective and we work closely with government and stakeholders to protect consumers with regard to both price and quality of service. Consumer recognition of our work and our value is growing. We have a strong track-record of innovation in the interests of consumers, working smart with limited resources. We deliver solutions that suit Northern Ireland's needs.

We also continue to develop our organisation with the goal of being a best practice regulator. Our corporate strategy for 2019-24 sets out how we can best make a difference for consumers. It also sets a course that embraces change and meets head-on the challenges of the future. To help us deliver this strategy we have taken steps to enhance how we are structured. This has resulted in us being organised into three groupings: Corporate, Networks and Markets.

This recruitment is focused on the appointment of a permanent Senior Legal Advisors working within the Corporate Affairs Directorate, you will support a small team of legal advisors to assist the Utility Regulator in the discharge of its functions relating to economic and customer service regulation for Northern Ireland's electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries.

May I take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in the competition to fill this post. We are keen to receive experienced applications from a wide range of backgrounds.

I look forward to your application.

Yours sincerely



Jenny Pyper
Chief Executive

2. About Us, Northern Ireland's Utility Regulator

We were first established in 1992, following privatisation of the Northern Ireland electricity industry, and our role extended in 1996 to cover gas. From April 2007, we also became the economic and customer service regulator for NI's water and sewerage industries.

We are a non-ministerial government department. Our board currently consists of a chair (Dr Bill Emery) and four other members (Teresa Perchard, Jon Carlton, Alex Wiseman, David De Casseres and Claire Williams), plus the Chief Executive, Jenny Pyper. The office currently employs approximately 85 staff.

The Chief Executive heads our Senior Management Team (SMT). The SMT also currently includes the Directors for Retail Markets, Wholesale Markets, Networks and Corporate Affairs. It meets weekly to review matters of common interest, and provides the collegiate leadership of the office.

Our Corporate Strategy and annual Forward Work Programme together with further information about organisation, its strategy and our work, may be viewed at www.uregni.gov.uk

Our mission:

To protect the short and long term interests of consumers of electricity, gas and water.

Our vision:

To ensure value and sustainability in energy and water.

Our values:

Be a best practice regulator: transparent, consistent, proportionate, accountable and targeted.

Be professional: listening, explaining and acting with integrity.

Be a collaborative, co-operative and learning team.

Be motivated and empowered to make a difference.

Electricity

Our principal objective is to protect the interests of consumers of electricity supplied by authorised suppliers, wherever appropriate by promoting effective competition between persons engaged in, or in commercial activities connected with, the generation, transmission or supply of electricity.

More information can be found at www.uregni.gov.uk/electricity

Retail and Customer Protection

The Retail and Customer Protection directorate was created in 2009 to remove barriers and drive forward work on encouraging gas and electricity suppliers to enter the domestic energy market in Northern Ireland, in order to provide consumers with a choice of supplier.

Competition has long been at the heart of the European Union (EU), United Kingdom (UK) and Northern Ireland vision of energy markets. A range of steps at all three levels have sought to promote wholesale and retail energy market competition.

The statutory remit given to us places a high value on competition as a means to deliver consumer benefits in the energy retail sector in Northern Ireland. The Directorate also undertakes the role of social protection for consumers.

We also have a vital role to play in promoting sustainability as we are the main gate keepers to infrastructure investment in three sectors with high environmental impact – electricity, gas and water.

More information can be found at www.uregni.gov.uk/retail

Water

Our main aim is to regulate the water and sewerage industry in Northern Ireland in a way that encourages and incentivises Northern Ireland Water to achieve the highest possible service for customers in terms of both quality and value.

More information can be found at www.uregni.gov.uk/water

Networks and Markets

The Networks and Markets Directorate is structured to achieve synergies and efficiencies by taking a cross utility approach to our regulation. This applies a cross utility (gas, electricity, water and sewerage) networks approach and a separate markets approach to regulation. Regulation of markets further divides into the Wholesale Electricity Market regulation of the Single Electricity Market for the island of Ireland and retail regulation in Northern Ireland.

Gas

Natural gas first arrived in Northern Ireland in 1996 and has since brought considerable environmental, economic and social benefits to Northern Ireland. It is the least polluting fossil fuel and its availability in an area provides greater fuel choice for industry. Natural gas also provides domestic customers with the opportunity to convert from inefficient central heating systems to highly efficient gas condensing boilers and in due course to domestic combined heating power.

We are responsible for regulating Northern Ireland's gas industry. Our main duties are to promote the development and maintenance of an economic, efficient and co-ordinated gas industry. We also aim to protect the interests of gas consumers with regard to price and quality of service.

More information can be found at www.uregni.gov.uk/gas

Corporate Affairs

Corporate Affairs includes the Corporate Services team which is led by the Head of Corporate Services. The team serves the organisation by carrying out a number of key functions including HR, Finance, ICT, Information Management, Facilities and Procurement. Corporate Affairs also includes three other teams covering a range of functions including sustainability, communications and strategy and the in-house legal team.

Other Work Streams

We hold concurrent competition law powers and are Northern Ireland's competition authority for the industries it regulates.

Being uniquely placed as the UK's only cross-utility regulator creates challenges and opportunities which we are keen to address over the coming years.

We have quasi-judicial powers to determine certain complaints, disputes and appeals.

3. Role Description

Role: Senior Legal Advisor
Group: Corporate Affairs
Reporting to: Head of Legal Services

Terms and Conditions:

Contract: Permanent, full time
Hours: 37 hours per week (UR operates a flexi-time system)
Salary: £55,763-£ 66,848 per annum
Pension: Northern Ireland Civil Service pension arrangements
Holidays: 25 days plus 12 public and privilege days

Role Purpose:

Working within the Corporate Affairs Directorate, the senior legal adviser will be expected to provide clear, concise and timely legal advice in response to requests for advice on matters relating to any aspect of the UR's extensive statutory remit. Such matters will include modifications required to regulatory licences and codes, transposition and implementation of European Directives in so far as they relate to electricity, gas and water; interpretation of energy and water law, advising on the determination of regulatory complaints and disputes and enforcement action in accordance with statutory requirements (where there has been a suspected breach of a licence or other legal requirement); advising on corporate issue and public law matters. They will also have to direct and manage the work of junior colleagues and engage constructively with colleagues across all UR directorates. The post will involve occasional travel within the UK and EU Member States.

The role itself will also involve some stimulating policy work in areas with a quasi-legal content: sustainability and environmental issues, financial penalties and enforcement, competition issues, freedom of information and data protection issues, complaints, disputes and appeals processes. The role will also carry more routine legal administration responsibilities to be carried out by the successful candidate on behalf of the Legal Department. For example you will also be involved in managing and working with the UR's external legal panel.

Key Contacts:

Internal: Contracted legal advisors, Chief Executive, Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Heads of Function (HoFs), managers, other Utility Regulator staff.

External: External industry legal representatives, comparable regulatory bodies, Northern Ireland Civil Service departments, external agencies.

Key Areas	Key Tasks
Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support a small team of legal advisors in provision of legal advice and assistance service. Contribute to the forward work planning and activities of the Legal Services Department. Assist the Head of Legal Services in reviewing Legal Services Department strategy. Assist the Head of Legal Services in providing expert legal advice as required on areas of strategic importance to the Utility Regulator.

Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide timely and effective legal advice on all aspects of regulatory law, competition law, public and administrative law, energy law and licensing regimes. • Drafting licence modifications, legal letters, legislative interpretation advices and providing verbal briefings as and when required on a wide range of areas of law. • Taking instruction from the Head of Legal as to the co-ordination of external legal advice with the contracted legal advisors. • Development of organisational expertise in concurrency and competition law fields including advising the Utility Regulator on its effective performance of its National Competition Authority role (which will involve occasional travel to London and Brussels). • To support all members of the Legal Services Department identify, report and suggest solutions to legal risks. • Lead and provide strategic advice on any litigation cases brought before the NI and/or ROI courts. • Primary contact for all litigation cases with contracted legal advisers and Counsel. • Lead and provide advice in relation to all UR enforcement matters, assist with Utility Regulator's enforcement role and advise on its powers and duties. • To provide legal support on specific projects such as the SEM. • Lead and provide advice to all Regulatory Appeals, Complaints & Disputes. • Provide training to legal and other staff as required. • Assist in the co-ordination and response to Freedom of Information and data subject access requests.
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead specific project teams as defined by senior management. This will involve overseeing team input which may include research, analysis and constructively challenging other team member contributions. • Ensure key objectives are SMART, align with corporate objectives, and that Personal Development Plans and Performance reviews are carried out within organisational deadlines. • Engage as part of the Leadership Team in order to develop and deliver the UR People Agenda (liP). • Assist the Utility Regular to develop the standing and reputation of the Legal Services Department as a centre of excellence both within the Utility Regulator and with stakeholders. • Training and development of Utility Regulator staff as appropriate.
Financial Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure work objectives are delivered within agreed timescales and budgets. • Contribute to the planning, monitoring and adherence to the expenditure of the Legal Services Department budget and the contracted legal advisors budget as appropriate. • As required contribute to the evaluation and cost appraisals (including Value for Money) for legal resources, training schemes, and related items.
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a consistent approach from a legal perspective in relation to internal policies and procedures. • Contribute to developing the standing and reputation of the Legal Services Department as a centre of excellence with respect to Northern Ireland utility law (both within the Utility Regulator and with service providers, external agencies etc.).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a good understanding of the principles and practices within the organisation and the utilities industry.
Health & Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate responsibility for your own health and safety and that of those with whom you work. • Contribute to an environment where Health and Safety is promoted and responsibility taken for resolving any issues within the Legal Services Department e.g. in relation to stress management.
Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input to the Corporate Affairs Directorate Risk Register as required. • Contribute to identification of legal risks, & strategic risks for Corporate Affairs Directorate and the wider organisation.
Customer Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to external queries and consultations as appropriate.
Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop effective working relationship with the Senior Management Team and key members of the regulated companies to ensure effective regulation. • Provide a direct point of contact between the Utility Regulator and external specialist support. • Build relationships with Ofgem/Ofwat and other key stakeholders in relation to e.g. strategy and policy development etc. • Develop relationships with key stakeholders, comparable regulatory bodies, regulated companies and external agencies. • Act as an ambassador for the Utility Regulator at seminars, training and conferences.

The Utility Regulator's statutory remit and organisational structure is continuing to evolve. It is therefore quite possible that the scope of the advertised role may evolve significantly with consequential changes to the job description.

4. Selection Criteria

Applicants must meet the following essential criteria and key skills by the closing date for applications.

Essential Criteria

1. Ability to demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to workplace values that align to those of the UR.
2. A qualified solicitor or barrister, qualified to practice in Northern Ireland or England and Wales with post qualification experience;
3. At least 5 years post qualification experience gained working in energy law; and/or public/administrative law; and/or regulatory law;
4. Proven ability to analyse complex legal issues and provide clear and concise advice and solutions that resolve business problems at a senior level*;
5. Proven ability to manage significant workloads with limited resources and deliver outputs in line with client/customer expectations and deadlines;
6. Proven ability to build and maintain productive communication networks with colleagues and stakeholder organisations; and
7. Proven experience in both the successful management of a panel of external legal consultants and the ability to manage** internal staff.

Note: Republic of Ireland or other common law jurisdictions may be considered. An overseas qualification is only acceptable if it is fully comparable and equivalent to the UK counterpart. You will be required to present original certificates/documentation if you are invited to the next stage of the selection process.

**Senior level is defined as reporting to or advising Board or Senior Managers.*

***This may be demonstrated by experience of direct line management or via a mentoring or guiding role for other legal team members.*

Desirable Criteria

1. Knowledge or experience of regulatory law;
2. Knowledge or experience of EU law;
3. Knowledge or experience of company/commercial law; and
4. Knowledge or experience of public/administrative law.

Key Skills

- Excellent legal drafting skills and attention to detail;
- Good knowledge of technical law and the ability to assimilate complex technical information;
- Excellent communication skills;
- Strong organisational and planning skills;
- Ability to work under pressure and committed to delivering on deadlines;
- Ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and external stakeholder organisations; and
- Excellent interpersonal skills and the ability to work collaboratively with colleagues and external stakeholder as part of a wider team.

Management Skills

- Ability to articulate management approach and evaluate alternative approaches;
- Demonstrable experience managing financial resources, tracking budgets, etc.;
- Demonstrable experience designing or procuring consultancy or research support, including awareness of good practice in managing outside resources;
- Ability to lead, motivate and forge effective relationships at all levels internally, externally and cross functionality; and
- Strong leadership skills with the ability to provide direction and focus for team members as well as motivating the team to achieve results.

Analytical Thinking

- Experience of making sound judgements, taking into account all relevant technical, legal, financial and economic factors;
- Experience of analysing complex strategic issues;
- Intellectual ability to assess strategy effectively; and
- Ability to think creatively, to innovate and resolve problems.

Communication Skills

Can demonstrate sound oral and written communication skills which enable you to:

- Present succinctly and convincingly to senior staff;
- Represent the Utility Regulator's views on topics within your area of responsibility to other organisations and in public forums; and
- Deal and communicate authoritatively and effectively with industry, business, consumers and their representatives and the public sector.

Competency Framework

UR Competency Framework.

5. The Recruitment and Selection Process

How to Apply

Completed application forms must be received by **2:00pm on 12 October 2020**.

Please submit your application form by email. A typed or scanned signature will be accepted. Please submit your completed equal opportunities monitoring form in a separate email labelled clearly “Monitoring Form” in the subject line. The onus is on the candidate to ensure their application is received before the closing date and we will use the time it is received according to the UR computer systems, not the time sent from a candidate’s email account.

Applications and queries can be emailed to recruitment@uregni.gov.uk

Applications will be acknowledged by email within seven days from close of competition. **If you do not receive an acknowledgement, please contact the Utility Regulator at recruitment@uregni.gov.uk 07805 819 666 or 07794 965 909.**

Candidates with a disability who require assistance will be facilitated upon request. Candidates who wish to receive the information pack in accessible formats are requested to advise of their requirements as promptly as possible allowing for the fact that the closing date for receipt remains the same for all applicants as noted above.

It should be noted that the Utility Regulator may use reserve lists to fill similar, suitable posts within 12 months of competitions.

Monitoring Form

The Utility Regulator monitors applications for employment in terms of community background, sex, disability and race. You should note that this information is regarded as part of your application and failure fully to complete and return this part of your application will result in disqualification.

The use and confidentiality of community background information is protected by the Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. It will be used only for monitoring, investigations or proceedings under the requirements of the above legislation.

The Utility Regulator is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified applicants irrespective of age, sexual orientation, marital status/civil partnership, dependants, religious belief, political opinion, gender reassignment, race, sex or disability.

Job Applicant’s Privacy Notice

The Utility Regulator is the data controller of the personal information you provide to us as an individual seeking employment. This means the Utility Regulator determines the purposes for which and the manner in which any personal information relating to a candidate’s application and the recruitment procedure generally is processed. We are required under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) to notify you of the information contained in the Utility Regulator Job Applicant’s privacy notice. This privacy notice describes how we collect and use personal information during the recruitment process and afterwards in accordance with the GDPR and can be downloaded in full from <https://www.uregni.gov.uk/publications/gdpr-privacy-notice>

Applications

In order to help you make this application and ensure that each applicant is provided with the same opportunity, the following advice is offered:

- Do not use acronyms, complex technical detail etc. Write for the reader who will probably not know your employer or your job. Include concise examples and be sure you can expand on these at interview.
- Listing the titles of the various jobs which you have held will not show how you meet the criteria. The panel will not make assumptions about skills and experience gained from these or the nature/name of the organisation.
- Write down clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Write “I” statements e.g. I planned meetings, I managed a budget, I prepared a presentation. It is how you actually carried out the piece of work that the panel will be interested in.
- Identify relevant examples – this is very important as the examples which you provide may be checked out at interview and you may need to be prepared to talk about these in detail if you are invited to interview. It is your unique role the panel are interested in, not that of your team.

An application form is designed to ensure that applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the eligibility/short listing criteria required for this post. The panel may decide to interview only those applicants who appear, from the information they have provided on their application, to be most suitable in terms of relevant experience and ability.

Please note to ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants:

- On the application form you have been advised of the maximum space available for each question, this is the same for all applicants and must not be altered (except to delete spaces created when you type in your answer).
- CVs, letters, additional pages or any other supplementary material in place of, or in addition to completed application forms will not be accepted.
- Applicants must complete the application form in either font size 10 to 12, or legible hand writing using black ink. The same limitations on space apply.
- Information in support of your application will not be accepted after the closing date for receipt of applications. Incomplete application forms will not be considered. Application forms received after the closing deadline or reformatted application forms will not be accepted. Applicants using Royal Mail should note that 1st class mail does not guarantee next day delivery. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient postage has been paid to return the form to the Utility Regulator. Any application where there is any shortfall in postage will not be accepted.
- Applicants who send their application form electronically are also required to meet the closing deadline for receipt in this office. Please note that the time of receipt will be defined by the Utility Regulator server, not the time and date sent. You must also follow-up by sending a paper copy by post along with your equal opportunities monitoring form and these must arrive within a week of the closing date. Your electronic copy will be used for shortlisting, not the paper copy.
- Only the details provided by you on your application form (the employment history and eligibility criteria) will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining eligibility and shortlisting for the post.

Eligibility Sift

After the closing date, the first stage in the selection process will be to conduct a sift of completed application forms against the essential eligibility criteria. You must demonstrate on the relevant page of the application form how you meet the criteria stated. If you do not fully demonstrate how you meet each of the eligibility criteria you will not be progressed to the next stage of the process. **You will be notified of the outcome (successful/unsuccessful) by email.**

Shortlist

If further short listing is required, the next stage would be to conduct a sift against the desirable criteria. In the event of a large volume of applicants, scored shortlisting against the eligibility criteria may also be used to form a final shortlist.

Interview

Following shortlisting, it is intended that the selection process will involve an assessment and interview against the criteria and key skills for the role. Panels may test any aspect of either the essential or desirable criteria, or both. Additional stages to the selection process may be required. **It is intended that the assessment and interview processes will take place in Belfast week commencing 19th October 2020 and 2nd November in Queens House, Belfast. However, this will be subject to Executive guidance on COVID-19 restrictions.**

You will be notified of the outcome (successful/unsuccessful) by email.

The Utility Regulator's statutory remit and organisational structure is continuing to evolve. It is therefore possible that the scope of the advertised role may evolve with consequential changes to the job description.

Disability requirements at interview

We will ask on the application form if you require any reasonable adjustments (special requirements), due to disability, to enable you to attend interview. Details of any disability are only used for this purpose and do not form any part of the selection process.

If you have indicated on your application that you have a disability and are successful in the selection process and are being considered for appointment, you may be required to outline any adjustments you consider necessary in order for you to take up an appointment. If you wish to discuss your disability requirements further, please email recruitment@uregni.gov.uk

Further Information

Further information about the work of the Utility Regulator can be found at <http://www.uregni.gov.uk>

Should you have any further queries about the recruitment and selection process then call the Utility Regulator on 028 9031 1575.

Checklist for Applicants

- Application Form
 - ☐ Emailed by closing date
 - ☐ Hard copy posted to HR (confirmed in email sent with submitted application form)
- Equality Monitoring Form
 - ☐ Hard copy posted to HR (sealed envelope)

6. Terms of Appointment

The following headline terms will subsequently be included (amongst other terms and conditions) in a written contract of employment between you and the Utility Regulator.

Salary

This is a permanent, full-time post. The starting base salary will be in the range of £55,763 - £66,848 per annum p.a. The successful applicant will normally be offered the first point on the salary scale. You will be paid monthly in arrears via Bankers Automated Clearing Service (BACS).

Pension

Staff employed by the Utility Regulator are civil servants and as such are automatically enrolled into the Northern Ireland Civil Service pension arrangements. Information about pensions can be found at www.finance-ni.gov.uk/topics/working-northern-ireland-civil-service/civil-service-pensions-ni

Place of Work

The postholder will be an employee of the Utility Regulator and will be based at Queens House, Queen Street, Belfast.

Hours of Work

This is a full-time appointment. The offices of the Utility Regulator are open for business between the hours of 7am and 7pm Monday – Friday. **Staff may avail of “flexi-time” provided that it meets with the business need, with flexible start and finish times outside the core hours of 10am to 4pm.** Due to the nature of your position you may be required to work such additional hours over and above your standard hours (37 hours excluding meal breaks) as may be necessary for the proper fulfilment of your duties for which no additional payment will be made. **All staff are currently working remotely from home and this is subject to Executive guidance on COVID-19 restrictions.**

Holiday Entitlement

Holiday entitlement will be pro-rated based on **25 days per annum (increasing to 30 days after 2 years’ continuous service) and 12 public and privilege holidays.**

Within your current role, if you have already attained annual leave of 30 days by dint of service with the NI or GB Civil Service, your holiday entitlement will be 30 days from your commencement date (pro-rated).

Probationary Period

There will be a probationary period of 6 months and continued employment will be dependent on the outcome of this probationary review. During the probationary period your performance will be regularly monitored and the Utility Regulator reserves the right to extend your probationary period for such further period or periods as it considers reasonably necessary to assess your performance further.

Additional Information

Successful candidates must obtain a basic disclosure certificate from AccessNI prior to commencement of employment and may be required to attend a medical examination. Full details will be provided with your offer of employment.

As an employee of the Utility Regulator you will be subject to various office policies, for example, rules on shareholdings, conflicts of interest, and future appointments.

The Utility Regulator is an Equal Opportunities Employer.